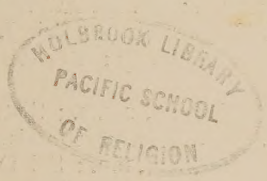


The South India Churchman

The Magazine of the Church of South India



Missionary Festival at Madurai
Mrs. Mona Hensman Opening the Sale

OCTOBER 1966

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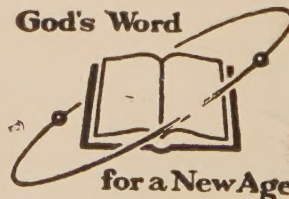
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'What shall I Preach About?'

This is the title of a *Key Book* by John Stephens of Nigeria,* in an Indian edition at the remarkably cheap price of Re. 1.25. It consists of sermon outlines, one to a page, for each Sunday from Advent to Trinity, on 'The Christian Faith', and a further nineteen additional outlines for other Sundays on 'The Christian Life'. The purchaser is evidently expected to provide the outlines for the other six Sundays for himself and his hearers will be happy if he manages to attain the standard of those given in this book. If any CSI preacher, however, decides to invest a rupee in this book to save himself the trouble of thinking out sermons on the topics of the CSI Propers, he will be disappointed, for Mr. Stephens and the CSI Liturgy Committee are not of one mind as to what they should preach about, and agree only on about one-third of the subjects. From the report on the Bangalore Preachers' Summer College in our last issue it would not appear that this book figured in their curriculum either, in spite of it being a *Key Book* on the subject circulated throughout the world. Nevertheless it is a welcome book, not because it will save preachers the toil of sermon preparation, for that it will not do, as of set purpose it provides only the skeleton which must be clothed by the preacher, but because it does offer guide-lines for timely messages which are designed to be 'simple and straightforward, carefully reasoned and biblically sound.' That preachers of varied interests will find help from it may be judged by the fact that it contains two sermons on 'The New Birth', one on 'Christ and the Land', another on 'Health', and others on 'Christianity and Islam', 'Christian Literature', 'The Christian and his Work', 'The Upbringing of Children' and even on 'Christian Literature' and 'Our Attitude to the Roman Catholic Church', subjects on which CSI Christians should undoubtedly be both thinking and acting.

SIX THOUSAND PREACHERS

In his preface Mr. Stephens reminds us that 'one way by which the spiritual life of a Church may be judged is the standard of its preaching. That spiritual life is greatly strengthened when the standard is a high one.' If the quality of the preaching is indeed a yardstick by which one can measure the standard of spiritual life, it is sad that 'Renewal and Advance', in so many ways a masterly survey of the CSI, is almost silent concerning it, both in information and recommendation. Can it be that the preaching in the CSI is so wonderful that the Commission was speechless in admiration, or did the members feel in their great charity that the less said about it the better? True to say, to assess the preaching in the CSI would be indeed a colossal task. There are 8,452 congregations in the CSI. The Editor of *The Christian Handbook*, brave man, is attempting to list them all by name and district (and even telephone number!), but one fears that even he would flinch before the task of assessing the standard and influence of the eight thousand CSI sermons preached every Sunday, if we may assume that each congregation is treated to at least one. It is doubtful, however, if we can make such an assumption, for according to our statistics there are more congregations than accredited preachers, who, if we total the number of Bishops, paid and voluntary presbyters and deacons, paid men evangelists and voluntary lay preachers, number 6,145, or 2,307 less



than the number of our congregations. Although some preachers may be able to visit more than one congregation on a Sunday if the hours of service are staggered, it is quite certain that the great majority of our voluntary lay preachers, who number 3,636 or almost 60% of our preaching strength, will not be in a position to preach every Sunday. Would we be very far wrong in suggesting that at least a quarter of our congregations, and possibly even half of them cannot depend on having an accredited preacher every Sunday? It is easy enough for those of us who belong to town congregations, for whom there are two or even three services on a Sunday, to forget the fact that the CSI is predominantly a rural Church and that there are thousands of village congregations for whom the ministry of the word is shamefully inadequate.

THE FORGOTTEN LEGION

If it is beyond doubt that the ministry of the word in the CSI is inadequate because of the shortage of preachers, can we honestly say that we are compensating for this deficiency in some measure by the quality of the preaching? The statistics tell us that our 6,145 preachers consist of 16 bishops, 988 presbyters, 122 deacons, 1,309 men evangelists, a total of 2,475 paid workers, together with 52 presbyters, 22 deacons and 3,636 lay preachers who are honorary. Thus our preachers roughly fall into three grades, the 1,200 clergy (paid and honorary), who, we may assume have taken some kind of college training in homiletics, the 1,309 evangelistic workers, who must have had some form of instruction in preaching in their training institutions, and the 3,636 voluntary lay preachers who must have received sufficient simple teaching to qualify for a Bishop's licence or other credential. It will be noted that the clergy, the professional preachers, who by virtue of their education and the special training they have received, ought to be able to preach a reasonably good sermon, form only 19% of our preaching force. Of the remaining 81%, 21% are evangelists, the majority of elementary education and whose sermons are also likely to be somewhat elementary. The remaining 60% are voluntary lay preachers for whom the CSI as yet does not seem to have any common standard. At one end of the scale there are well educated and professional men who have made an honest effort to master the craft of the sermon and at the other end there are village farm labourers just out of illiteracy who have been enlisted because of their ability to communicate to their fellows the substance and moral of a simple Bible story. In between there is the large company of ordinary working men of average education, some of whom, alas, aspire to the pulpit for their own ends from pride and vainglory, but most of whom are men whom

* *What shall I Preach About?*—John Stephens, Lucknow Publishing House and C.L.S.—Re. 1.25.

God has called from the plough, the school, the office, the shop and the factory, saying, 'Go, preach to my people.' These men are our glory. They are also our shame, for what have we done and what are we doing to help them to make their preaching effective, and so to equip them that they may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work? They are not only our largest body of preachers in our congregations but they are our preachers in the world, across frontiers which our ordained ministers cannot easily pass. They are our key men and it is to help such men that Mr. Stephens has prepared his *Key Book*. But what is one *Key Book*? Are these 'local' preachers 'the forgotten legion' of the CSI?

THE MEN OF THE FRONTIER

If it is indeed true that Church Growth is vitally connected with the ministry of the word, (and I have no doubt that Dr. Raju would be able to produce statistics to confirm it), then one of the priorities of the CSI must be the revitalising of its preachers and in particular those who have had the least opportunities of training and study. The legion of the local preachers must be forgotten no longer. Indeed it must be brought into the centre of the picture. Let every diocese regard the recruitment, training and care of voluntary lay preachers as one of its most vital concerns. Seminars on the lines of the recent Bangalore Summer College for Preachers should be held at once in every Diocese. Regular Preachers' meetings and tutorials, retreats and refresher courses, study circles and correspondence courses, libraries and subsidised book schemes, the preparation of special books and other aids in different languages—all these are needed together with the continual interest and prayers of the Church. We have appointed strong Synod committees on Voluntary Workers and Laity Work, both with first class conveners, but what funds have

we placed at their disposal? What encouragement have we given them? Great indignation has been raised about the plight of the poor independent laymen denied a place on our governing bodies, but what interest has anyone taken in those devoted and uncomplaining laymen who week by week give up their time to prepare and preach messages from the word of God? An appeal has just been launched for eight lakhs of rupees to open a School for Advanced Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore, which will provide us with a few more specialists who can engage in 'dialogue and an exchange of information and ideas at the level of advanced scholarship among men of different religious communities.' We have 3,636 voluntary lay preachers in the CSI who have to be ready every day for dialogue and exchange of ideas with men of different faiths, not in the refined atmosphere of advanced scholarship but in the far more difficult areas of everyday work and life. If we think it worth-while to spend eight lakhs for a few doctorates, how much more should we be spending to equip our key preachers and ambassadors. 'We don't listen to sermons any more', said the students through their representative at the recent Bangalore Summer College for Preachers. Then we must help the preachers to set right the sermons, for preach we must. The Lord commanded it. His people need it. The world waits for it, for the living Word that speaks to living issues, to the actual problems people face in their life and work in the changing society of today. As Bishop Sargant reminded the Summer College, one of the most important aspects of the work of the Church is to bring about a vital meeting between the Word and men in the world. Our honorary lay preachers are our men on the frontiers, men of the Church and men of the world. Let us help them to speak the vital Word, that 'manifestation of the Incarnate Word, from the Written Word, by the Spoken Word,' which, according to Dr. Sangster, constitutes a sermon.

Christians and Independent India

At midnight on the 14/15th August, 1947—nineteen years ago—when the Union Jack was lowered from the flag-staff in the Red Fort in Delhi and the Indian Tricolour was run up,—our great Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made a memorable speech. He referred to the tryst—a tryst with destiny—which the Indian Nation had made years ago at the very beginning of the freedom struggle, which tryst was being kept that day. He referred to the new era in India's long history which was beginning at that hour and he spoke of the new burdens which the nation was taking on and the new responsibilities which had devolved upon it.

This morning, as the nation is preparing to observe the anniversary of our Independence, it is but right that we (those of us who can remember this period of 19 years) should let our minds and thoughts go back over this period which has intervened between that day and this; and try to see how far we as a nation have fulfilled the responsibilities which we then undertook to discharge.

The commemoration of our Independence day need no longer be—*should* no longer be—merely an occasion for emotional jubilation. It must, as the years go by, become increasingly an occasion for retrospection, for reassessment, for a reassertion of our determination to make good and a national rededication to the task of building up an independent India.

What has been our share—as Christians?

Today however I am not going to lead your thoughts along that line. I am going to ask you to think on a matter of far greater importance. I want you to put yourselves the question: 'How far have we as a community of Christian Indians, and how far have we individually helped or hindered the progress of the nation? Have we done anything to help our country towards the fulfilment of her destiny?'

This question does not mean—how far have we dabbled in politics or helped this or that political party? It means something much deeper and much more difficult than that.

It means how far have we—each one of us, in his or her respective place and position, made any positive contribution to the material, intellectual, moral and spiritual progress of the nation—the government servant in his job, the teacher in his or her school, the clerk in his office, the accountant in his firm, the businessman in his trade, the worker in the factory, the minister in his parish, and the bishop in his See?

There is no need to join any political party in order to help our country. Joining a political party may even prevent our helping our country, because all political parties here appear to place the interests of the party above the interests of the country. The rivalry between

these parties is not a competition for serving the country but a scramble for power.

It is only through good citizenship, through faithfully and honestly doing one's allotted job and, we Christians in particular, by being truly, visibly and effectively Christian, that we can help the country.

The nation before self, the country above party, but God's Kingdom above all—that should be the motto of the Christian Indian and indeed of every one who really loves his country and does not merely pretend to patriotism in order to feather his own nest.

I. Christians are strangers in any earthly country

When however we begin to consider our obligations as Christians to the nation and think of ourselves in relation to our country, there is one thing that we Christians have constantly to bear in mind.

Primarily, and in one sense—but in a deep meaningful sense—we Christians are not citizens of this country at all or members of this nation. We are in fact citizens of Heaven and members of God's Kingdom. 'Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ' (Phil. 3 : 20). All Christians are, in this basic sense, strangers in this world and in every country. You remember how, in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian and Faithful were dealt with in Vanity Fair, as uncouth foreigners from some other country, different from themselves in every way. Their conduct and deportment, as they passed through Vanity Fair, were not understandable by the local inhabitants. The Fair on which the natives set so much store and on the merchandise traffic of which their lives depended, appeared to have no attraction to those foreigners. The two strangers were not attracted by the glittering baubles so temptingly spread out for sale. This caused the local inhabitants and the sellers in the Fair great surprise and not a little annoyance. Christian and Faithful were therefore arrested and imprisoned on suspicion of being dangerous spies. This is how Christians appear to and are treated by the world—when they are real Christians and not but nominally so.

The primary and basic loyalty of Christians is to God and His Kingdom—not to any particular country. To be a member of the commonwealth of heaven supercedes all national loyalties. Our obligations to God and his Kingdom, by virtue of our being Christians, over-rule (but as I shall point out later, do not abrogate) our obligations to the nation.

Being thus members of another Kingdom, subjects of another King, we Christians are aliens in the country of our physical birth. The Bible definitely says so:

'We are fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God.' (Ephes. 2 : 19).

'Here we have no abiding city; but we seek for one to come.' (Heb. 13 : 14).

We are but strangers and sojourners in this world. We are citizens of a heavenly commonwealth, who are forced to live, for the time being, in a foreign country.

Hence it is that we Christians cannot give final sovereignty to any earthly power. In the New Testament we find Christians asked to honour and obey the Emperor; but not to fear Him. When they honour him, they do so because they have already given their first and highest allegiance to God. The honour they gave to the Emperor was of a different kind and of a lower significance than the utter allegiance they had already given to the King of Kings.

This is something which nations and States, whether ancient or modern, find it hard either to understand or to accept. Christians can never give unconditional and

unlimited loyalty to any earthly power because their primary citizenship is in a heavenly State and their first loyalty is to a heavenly King who is above all earthly Kings.

The early Christians and some Christians right down the ages faced fiery trials and terrible persecution and a few even suffered martyrdom, just because their faithfulness to God demanded that they should in some way limit their obedience to earthly rulers. In some sense, and on a much smaller scale, Christians in any country must be prepared to be misunderstood, discriminated against and even persecuted in petty ways. This is because they are in fact, and by conviction act as, strangers to the country and do not acknowledge the final sovereignty of the nation.

And not only States and nations, but even society resents these strangers in their midst, who do not consider themselves fully members of that society and do not conform to its demands, who do not revere the popular idols, who do not agree with widely-held opinions, and do not accept its taboos. Any society resents a love which loves all men, without considering whether they have deserved to be loved or not, which loves even the unlovable ones. Society does not appreciate and in fact deprecates a humility which is not interested in worldly success. It is unable to understand people who do not care for material prosperity and are careless about amassing wealth. Normal human society fails to see the reason behind a confidence in God and a trust in Him which gives no room for any anxiety about earthly things.

If we are Christians in any real sense, this is how we should appear in the eyes of the world and how we should expect to be treated by society. If we have no trouble with the world and get on merrily with the society round about us, whose main concern is 'getting on in this world, by hook or by crook' it is because we are not Christian enough to excite their curiosity, induce their resentment and provoke their opposition.

II. Not Exiles, but Ambassadors

Even though we are strangers in this country and are exiles from our own homeland which is elsewhere, we are not out here helpless orphans. We are not refugees, displaced persons, dependent on the charity of the land in which we live our earthly life. We do not need to hide our heads in shame, or in shyness, because we do not belong here. On the other hand we have been sent by our King to these several earthly countries with His authority and under His protection as Ambassadors from the heavenly commonwealth. Located for a period in another country, we come clothed with all the majesty of our other-world citizenship. We do not need to cover our heavenly garb with the cloak of worldly wisdom. We do not need when in Rome to do as the Romans do.

We are not only accredited ambassadors; but we are also heralds of our King, commanded and commissioned to proclaim the demands of that King on this country to which we have been sent. We Christians are here to call the citizens of this country of India to the same heavenly allegiance as ours. We are here in order to make God's Kingdom known to the people of this land and to get His Sovereignty over them, as over all other peoples of the earth, accepted by them. We are here to try our best, to work our hardest, to get our countrymen in the flesh to give their first allegiance to the Lord of Lords, the Head of the heavenly Commonwealth.

It is true we only bide our time to return to our homeland; but while we are here, we are to walk worthy of our appointment as ambassadors from the heavenly Kingdom to this earthly kingdom, our vocation as living epistles for Christ in this world.

III. Our Other-Worldly Citizenship does not Abrogate our Obligations here

But our heavenly citizenship does not in the least cancel our obligations to the country of our physical birth, the country where we live. We are not relieved of our duties to our nation because of our membership of the family in heaven. On the other hand our obligations become more peremptory. Our sense of duty to our country becomes sharper, because we have accepted the higher standards which prevail in the realm of the Spirit.

Christians must be the foremost to render service to their nation. They will be failing in their duty to their heavenly King if they do not help the nation to which they have been sent as ambassadors and heralds, if they retire into a ghetto as a community or individually shut themselves inside a shell. They must live and be active within the nation, in the places where they live and work. This means not dabbling in politics but rendering service to the nation.

Our duties to the nation

What then are our duties to the country, to the land of our birth? How are we to fulfil our obligations to our nation? What should we do in order to help our country in her onward march towards her destiny?

Our country's progress depends entirely on how every one of her citizens discharges the responsibilities of citizenship. On us, the Christian citizens of the country, the responsibility lies with greater weight because of our Christian profession, faith and belief. For us Christians good citizenship is a spiritual duty by the discharge of which we seek to attain a spiritual purpose. Alas! that so few of us realise this.

Our obligations (whether we are Christians or non-Christians) can be discharged not by tall talk, by wordy pretence, not by unthinking routine living, not by mere passive existence; but only by conscious, self-giving activity, work and service.

(a) Pray for the nation and its rulers

The primary duty of Christian Indians is to pray for our country and her rulers. Citizenship is primarily a spiritual responsibility. Good citizenship is a means to a spiritual end. No country exists merely in order that human beings may live in it. No Government says or can say that its business is merely to provide food and clothing to its people. It must help the people and all good Governments agree—in much more than material welfare. They do not want their people merely to exist, just like animals exist. They want their people to live as human beings were created by God to live, in bodily, mental and spiritual health and enjoyment. Any Government which wants to be accepted as civilised must help human living all round, in body, mind and spirit.

Even countries which say that they have no concern with anything but the material welfare of the people, do, whether they intend it or not, provide the climate, the atmosphere and the soil where their people can develop their whole personality. It is inevitable. If a Government concentrates the attention of the people on the things relating to bodily welfare to that extent the spiritual quality of the people will be adversely affected. (This has nothing to do with and does not follow on a Government being a secular one.)

That is why Governments and rulers need our prayers.

We Christians in India are in fact doing this and have been doing it for a long time. All the Christian Churches in the country of whatever persuasion have set prayers which are prescribed to be offered—in some regularly as in the Church of South India at every public divine service, in others occasionally. In the Church of South India in the daily offices of morning and evening prayer and in the weekly service of the Lord's Supper, there are suffrages for the country and her rulers. Both Independence Day and Re-

public Day are to be observed with special services of public worship and special Collects and readings from the Bible have been prescribed.

And we pray not only for good Government but that our rulers must be endowed with wisdom from on high—that they may be guided 'with God's pure and peaceable wisdom' and that under their rule the people may not only be happy but may serve God in peace and without interference.

We Christian Indians therefore discharge our primary duty to our nation and our Government by regularly approaching the Throne of Grace and interceding for them.

(b) Charwomen of the nation

Secondly, we Christians help our country effectively when we, for the good of the country, do the chores which no one else wants to do, as being unglamorous, most times also unprofitable to themselves. A chore is an unpleasant task. It is the sort of thing that is left to the charwoman, who does the odd and menial jobs in the house, like sweeping the house, scrubbing the floor, cleaning the vessels, emptying the ashes from the oven and so on—the work which is done by the person who, in Indian Christian parlance, is called the 'top-work woman.' We Christians are, and must willingly become, the charwomen for the nation. We must do the cleaning, the sweeping, the removal of age-old cob-webs that still dirty social and national life.

No one else wants to undertake these humble, unnoticed and thankless jobs. No one else can do these jobs because their performance requires special spiritual equipment, moral stamina, and a strength of will. They need to be done in a spirit of self-effacing humility and with complete disinterestedness. You won't gain anything by doing these chores; but the country will greatly benefit. We who have the power of the love of Jesus Christ made available to us through the means of grace which He himself has provided, are the only ones who can do them and must do them for the country.

Each one of us must think out for himself or herself how he or she can do these chores in his or her own situation, in the work which each of us is doing, either in the outside world or in the home. In every one of the places where you live and work you will find these hoary cob-webs, sub-moral traditions, customs of dubious propriety, *mamool* ways of doing things, ideas unsuited to help in the progress of a young independent nation. All these must be ruthlessly cleaned away. Vested interests will strongly oppose such cleaning up—just as the chief priests and Pharisees resented our Lord's cleaning up of the temple courtyard. God knows, and we all know, that there are Augean stables which are yet to be cleaned up in this country. This is a task which needs Herculean strength. Only the Christians in the country can do the cleaning up, provided they all work together and in the strength which God supplies.

(c) Conscience of the nation

Thirdly, we Christians must be and become the conscience of the nation.

Our loyalty to our country is governed by and is subject to God's laws of love, justice and morality. Our loyalty must therefore be discriminatory. My country, right or wrong, is a stupid motto for anyone and much more so to the Christian. A Christian cannot, because of his loyalty to his nation, agree to do things which go against the moral principles which have been incorporated by God in His governance of the Universe and which are of universal and eternal validity.

When the nation as a whole or a State or a local civic body adopts an immoral or even an unmoral policy, takes an unjust decision, or commits a palpably wrong act, Christians must protest and try their level best to get the wrong righted.

A Christian has the fundamental right to examine, to

judge, to criticise actions and policies, emanating from however high a level, to see if they conform to the eternal ethical principles which have been built into the material and moral progress of humanity.

But a Christian will earn the right, and can exercise that right, only if in his own private and public life he is above reproach; if he has himself no axes to grind, if he does it as a matter of conscience and not for vainglory or for gaining notoriety.

Similarly, the Christian community can act as the conscience of the nation only if its own communal conscience is sharp, clear and unclouded by communal self-interest. A Christian community which is itself corrupt, in which there are factions, and other social evils, caste distinctions and communal feelings for instance—a Christian community which has ceased to exercise and practise Christ's law of love—has no moral right to judge and criticise others. It can have no spiritual strength to act as the conscience of the nation.

(d) Not blind conformity

Fourthly, a Christian, and the Christian community as a whole, can be of maximum use to the nation only if he or it does not blindly conform.

His, or its, strength must lie in being consciously and conscientiously different, in ideals, in principles and in action from the majority.

This is a matter of great importance to the nation. Nothing does greater harm to our nation—to any nation—than when those members of it who by education, training, conviction and belief know better than the populace, keep quiet when they should be shouting at the top of their voices where and how things have gone and are going wrong. It has happened in our country as in many others. It may be that the conscientious minority was coerced into silence. Or it may be sheer laziness, a desire to let sleeping dogs lie, an unwillingness to create trouble on the part of that thinking and intelligent minority. Or it may even be a sheer moral and physical cowardice that makes them blind and dumb.

Conformity, passive acquiescence, has been and is the bane of our life—both in our private lives as Christian individuals in the midst of a non-Christian nation and in our life as a Christian community in a non-Christian environment.

We are terribly afraid of being different from other people. We want to be with the crowd. We do not want it to be noticed that in certain matters we disagree with mass-opinion. We do not have the courage of our convictions. We want to be known as just ordinary, normal, well-behaved people. We are ever ready to put on protective colouring. We want to avoid being seen to be different from our environment. Sometimes we go even to the length of camouflaging our Christianity. We want to soft-pedal the demands which our religion places upon us. We meticulously conform to the traditional practices of our surroundings, even when we know them to be reprehensible and thus we do great harm to the nation.

If in Government service, we conform to the tradition of inefficiency, corruption, taking the least trouble and avoiding undue exertion. If in business or trade, we dare not make a bold stand against the black-marketing, profiteering, underhand methods, keeping false accounts with intent to cheat, and a hundred other things which are indulged in for the sake of filthy lucre. If we are lawyers, we act on the principle that in the exercise of the legal profession one cannot avoid telling lies or passing off untruth as truth, argue a case knowing that the case is a false or a weak one. Even Christian teachers are now conforming to the evils which have gained a stronghold in the profession—laziness, partiality, actual corruption, taking money to add false marks, receiving bribes for giving admissions to the institution and so on.

Things have gone so far as to endanger the whole moral fabric on which the nation, the State and Society are based, and on which all good living and well-doing depend. Unless we Christians stand out boldly and put up a resistance, things will move so fast towards moral disaster and ruin that no power on earth can prevent it.

But conformity appears to be the ideal, these days, of grown-ups as well as young people: and this even in the Christian community. People want to go with the current and never against it, even when they know that they are being swept into moral ruin, if only for the time being they get material gain. Young people want above everything else to be 'in the fashion.' They want to be exactly like other young people, mostly like the young people of the West. They want to dress like them, speak like them and behave like them. To my mind this is a silly and unworthy ambition.

I recently read of a 'grubby little non-entity (in a petty office) who had drifted into corruption, only just realising that he was corrupt and chiefly because everyone did it.' The same can be said of many in the nation and even in the Christian community, whose consciousness and conscientiousness hardly exist apart from the social atmosphere that surrounds them. They do what they know to be wrong just because the majority do so and the chances of being caught are therefore small.

There is a good old song, a trifle old-fashioned perhaps but perfectly true and inspiring:

Dare to be a Daniel, dare to be alone!

Dare to have a purpose firm; dare to make it known.

Many mighty men are lost, daring not to stand,

Who for God had been a host, by joining Daniel's band.

Scripture definitely warns us against conformity to the world. The well-known verse, Romans 12:2, 'Be not conformed to the world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God', must be the working rule of every Christian. Conformity is doing havoc in our lives as well as in the nation.

Non-conformity is a matter of courageous thinking and brave obedience to the 'perfect will of God'.

Therefore let us not be guilty of unthinking conformity. Let us not accept prevailing ideas simply because they are widely held. Let us in every case examine them with reference to God's Word, and apply God's standards of love, equity and justice.

(e) Thinking

Thinking, independent thinking, is what is sadly lacking in the country these days—and even more among Christians. We Indian Christians do not read in consequence we do not think. We studied our text books, crammed them and passed our examinations. But after leaving College, we stopped reading books of any kind and therefore our minds have gone rusty and are no more capable of doing any thinking. The daily newspaper, usually of a cheap low-class variety, has become the pabulum on which we sustain our minds. Some of us, alas! do not read even the Bible which is compulsory reading for every Christian if he wants to remain a Christian. Those who read the Bible hardly ever read any other religious or other worth-while books. The few who have money to buy books prefer to buy the yellow paperbacks with lurid covers which are flooding our book shops. We appear to have long since abandoned the habits of reading and thinking and have made ourselves intellectually unfit for good citizenship both here and in the Heavenly commonwealth.

Nor do we take any other form of intellectual exercise. When we turn on the radio, we select the paltry stuff, hybrid cinema songs, vulgar jazz music. We do not listen

to the better and more edifying programmes—the talks, the reviews, good Indian and foreign classical music. The result of feeding our minds on muck is that we have become, for the most part, intellectual nonentities. As a community we have become incapable of giving any help to the nation on the intellectual side and especially when it faces, as during recent months and years, crisis after crisis. We cannot help our country by being a flock of sheep with congealed brains.

Our independent thinking is perhaps the most valuable help which we can give to our nation, except for the spiritual help which we can give if we are spiritually alive and sensitive. We are spiritually and intellectually too benumbed to exercise our rights as God's heralds. We are thus failing our country at a vital point of its need.

(f) Do everything in Christ-like love

The secret of good citizenship, of worthy membership of a young, newly-independent nation, with high ideals but tragically falling short of them in achievement, is in giving it selfless service, imbued with the spirit of love. Love and service are the two great contributions which we can make to the nation's welfare, as its Christian subjects. Not tall

talk, not selfish ambitions, not an eagerness to get something for ourselves by conforming to the majority opinion.

Whatever help we give, whatever criticism we make, must be given and made in a spirit of love—following our Master's example, who wept at his country's wilful blindness to his mission.

We Christians must love our country, where we have been placed by God, in the spirit of Christ so that the people may see that we have been with Jesus and have imbibed some of his spirit of sacrificial love, some of His zeal, some of his passion for personal and social purity, some of His enthusiasm for cleansing the body politic of its crying evils.

May God help us to love and serve our country and give it our utmost help, in the spirit of Christ. Then we shall be useful citizens of this land and at the same time we shall be worthily maintaining our citizenship of the Heavenly Commonwealth.

RAJAJAH D. PAUL

(From an address given in St. John's Church, Pondicherry, on the eve of Independence day, 1966).

The Mission of the Church Today

About thirty delegates appointed by several Churches in India participated in the four days Conference on 'Mission In the Light of Emerging Theology' sponsored by the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Bangalore, from the 16th to the 19th of August, 1966. The Church of the Brethren in Gujarat, Methodist Church of Southern Asia, Samavesam of Telugu Baptist Churches, South Arcot Lutheran Church, the Mysore, Dornakal, Rayalaseema, Medak, Madras, Madhya Kerala and Kanyakumari dioceses of the Church of South India, the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, the Colombo diocese of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma & Ceylon and organisations like the Church Missionary Society, the National Missionary Society and the Student Christian Movement of India were represented.

The Conference hours were utilised for four periods of Bible Study and two addresses by Canon Douglas Webster, Professor of Mission, Selly Oak Colleges, England, who was the main leader, six papers presented by six different men, and discussion following every session.

The first three Bible Studies were based on the images of Bread, Light and Shepherd in the Fourth Gospel (St. John—Chapters 6, 9, 10). Christ satiates the hunger, gives light to the blind, and is a haven to the homeless. But He goes beyond the immediate needs to the deeper hungers of every man. This pattern should be the basis of our Missionary approach even today. The Church may have limitations as to her resources. But that is no excuse for not catering to the physical needs of the people to whom the Gospel has to reach in its wholeness. While describing the incidents the writer of the fourth Gospel does not make sharp distinctions between physical and spiritual needs. One just merges to the other. Physical sight and spiritual sight are both expressed by the same word *Sight*.

Secondly, in these incidents there is an obvious stress on Joint Action. Jesus works with the Apostles in meeting all situations. Thirdly, help in every cause is 'given' and not earned while the human response is obedience. The Church is there because Christ is already in the world. It is because of the world and Christ confronting it that the Church has her mission.

In the last Bible Study, based on 1 Cor. 15 : 1-11, Canon

Webster spoke of the significance of the Gospel and the Church's relation to it. The historical fact of the Gospel makes it unique. Facts are the only conquering forces in the world. Besides the historical fact of the Gospel, the contemporaneity of the risen Christ experienced through encounter is a reality in every generation. Through encounter with the risen Christ the Church becomes an accepted community, and the corollary of this life of being accepted is the life of service. Here again we see the relation between preaching and service.

In the first address Canon Webster spoke briefly on the New Theology or The Emerging Theology. There is a certain amount of hesitation and uncertainty in Mission and Theology today because of the modern trend—New Theology and New Reformation. The twentieth century reformers are not missionaries as their sixteenth century counterpart too was not interested in Mission.

The stress on *Mission* and not *missions* is significant. Every country is a missionary country—sending and receiving. Mission is now de-westernised; it is internationalised. New frontiers are cut sociologically rather than geographically. Mission has to penetrate to these new frontiers. Mission is God's. The Church does not perform mission, but she participates in it. Mission has forfeited the privileges and protection offered by the State. The booster rocket of the imperial epoch has been removed now. Detachment of all kinds of imperialism—ecclesiastical, economic, etc., is essential for the survival of mission. Mission must be ecumenical. Modern structures cannot be penetrated denominationally. We reached almost the end of institutions like hospitals, schools, etc. The conviction of the Gospel is the basic requisite even today.

In his paper, 'A Positive Approach to other Faiths', the Very Rev. Fr. Jonas Thaliath, Rector of Dharmaram College, Bangalore, said that the uniqueness of Christianity is to be stressed in a positive approach to others. It is not easy to make out the plan of God for the non-Christian people from the Old Testament position towards the Gentiles. Salvation is for all mankind. Another positive approach is to present the idea of completion complementary to the concept of conversion.

A more positive approach will be that of an existential encounter instead of the dialectical encounter with other faiths. In an existential encounter there is no place for mass conversion. The foolishness of the cross will be a deeper enigma to the modern man. There is a consensus of opinion among theologians that the non-Christian religions have a positive role to play in that they have genuine aspirations for God expressed in sincere worship. There is a pre-Christian preparation in the plan of God to accept the Christian message since God wants all to be saved. It is not a linear or horizontal development but a vertical acceptance. We should not give an impression that we ourselves doubt the uniqueness of Christ. We must face the non-Christians in an ecumenical spirit as fellow-travellers.

In his paper, 'Evaluation of the Old and Search for the New', Dr. E. L. Ten-Brink, Programme Secretary, Ecumenical Christian Centre, said that penetration into the land and culture of the people, though difficult, is essential in preparing the climate for mission. There is an urgent need of clarification of goals. Institutions can become irrelevant when there is proliferation and unbridled use of institutions. The institutional structure of the Church must be a sacramental reality.

In his paper, 'Decree on Church's Missionary Activity', the Rev. Fr. H. Volken, S.J., of the Indian Social Institute spoke about the findings of the Second Vatican Council on Mission. There is a renewal of missionary zeal. On the one hand God is at work in His own ways in those who are ignorant of the Gospel. On the other hand there is the renewed vigour to preach the Gospel for God's glory. Witness of the believing community, especially witness through life and the preparedness for reformation enable evangelisation possible. Ecumenical co-operation is essential because mission is the task of the whole people of God.

In his paper, 'Indigenous Theology and Mission', Dr. F. Muliyl, formerly Professor, United Theological College, stressed on rediscovering the Gospel and a positive approach to Hinduism. We should not go to others with a ready-made Theology. Instead, by listening and understanding the Indian mode of life and thought, and by confronting the people through service, and by living with them, our theology should be formed.

In his paper, 'Apostolate through Secular Structures', the Rev. H. F. J. Daniel of the St. Mark's Cathedral, said that the idea of Church as salt in the world should be stressed. Residential house-groups must crop up wherever

people of the same profession can get together. The Church can co-operate with non-Christians, even communists in areas like industrial relations, trade union and social service agencies. The Church has to be involved in secular structures. The trouble with us is that we don't take even the primary structures seriously.

In his paper, 'Denominational Colonialism or Joint Action in Mission', the Rev. M. A. Thomas, Director, Ecumenical Christian Centre, said that any effective witness today is possible only through a united front. Fanatic denominational loyalty is an anachronism today. The Church must have the boldness to pull down structures that are antiquated. House-churches and small groups have to come up though they may cut across the traditional structures. Periodical restructuring and reforming of systems mark the sign of a growing Church.

In the closing address Canon Webster said that Mission is possible only where one completely involves oneself in the society where one is called to be. Our aim must be not just service to non-Christians but service with non-Christians. Disinterested love expressed in Christian service alone will make the proper climate for making men whole. The task of the Church today is to make roads in the wilderness where main roads are absent. These roads will become the 'king's way' for God to come down to His people and for the ransomed people to go up to God.

We should not make others feel inferior when we preach (preaching without arrogance). Preaching should be only at the proper moment and place. There must be a spontaneous expansion of the Church through lay-movements as is now taking place in Latin-America. Part-time ministry or working priests will become more in vogue in the days to come.

The Gospel is unchanged by old and new theologies. Secular man is less aware of needs today unlike the man in the past. So, the tendency to create an artificial need or to express a sense of helplessness before situations caused by new theology and secularism, are both bad. The Gospel must be presented for its own sake. For this we must understand it ourselves and have faith even in this twentieth century.

As a concluding remark, it must be said that the Conference was quite lively with active participation by all motivated by a sincere concern for mission and an open mind. Canon Webster remarked that this was one of most memorable and meaningful conferences he had ever been.

THE REV. M. V. ABRAHAM.

The Church

'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' Mt. 18:20.

This saying of Jesus is placed by St. Matthew in the middle of that section of his Gospel which deals with the establishing and ordering of the Church. It has always been regarded as a definition of what the Church is about, gathering up as it does into small compass the teaching of several chapters. What then is it that Jesus is saying; what is it that makes a Christian Church?

To outward appearances the Church is an organisation which caters for people who share common religious practices and disciplines. With this assessment we have no quarrel. Whenever we deliberately come together to acknowledge God's dominion and majesty, our sin and His Grace, we are engaged in something which is supremely

worth doing. Yet the essence of the Church, that without which there is no Church, does not lie in anything which we may do. One way of explaining this is to say that the Church is not an organisation but an event. Jesus said 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I AM', and this is the indispensable nucleus. It is the Living Presence of Our Lord which constitutes and delineates the Church. Where He is present, where He is worshipped, there is the Church, and without His presence there is no Church.

'Where two or three are gathered together IN MY NAME.' What did Jesus mean by meeting in His name? In Ch. 16 St. Matthew tells how on one of their journeys

Jesus and His disciples came near to the city of Caesarea Philippi. There Jesus asked His disciples 'What is my name? What is the name that people are giving to me?' and they informed Him of various suggestions that people were making. Then Jesus asked 'But what about you, what is the name you give to me?' Peter replied 'You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God'. To this confession Jesus made the promise 'Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'. The essence of the Church is the Presence of Jesus. But the Church becomes visible and accessible whenever men bear witness to Jesus as the Son of the Living God, wherever men confess Him as Lord and worship and obey Him. This is what it means to meet in His name. As He comes to us so we reach out to Him in gratitude and surrender. He speaks the word of His Gospel and calls us to Himself. Or, to turn it round, as we hear the Gospel and submit to its claims in faith, Jesus honours His promise with His own Presence. Jesus' I AM and our meeting IN HIS NAME are like the two sides of a single coin, and it is these two events which constitute the Church. Further to this, because in meeting in His Name we are in fact asking for His Presence, we are also desiring to enter willingly into the sphere of God's activity. In the New Testament 'in the name of Jesus' describes the sphere where miracles happen. It is in the Name of Jesus that the sick are healed, the lame are made to walk, the deaf are made to hear, the blind are made to see and the dead are made to live again. In the Name of Jesus describes the sphere where God is actively at work for our salvation, in the very midst of our human life on earth. It is the sphere of miracles, where sinners are converted and human lives are made beautiful in the sight of God and men. And the greatest of all the miracles is that Jesus Himself is abundantly present in the midst of those who meet in His Name, mighty to save.

'Where two or three....'. No one I know of interprets this as meaning that when a person is on his own he ceases to be a Christian or a member of the Church. Yet surely these words are important for our understanding of what the New Testament means by the Church.

(a) Certainly I believe that Jesus died for me, but I also believe that He died for me and saves me in order to recreate the fellowship of God's family which sin has destroyed. This involves the confession that Jesus died for all, and that He intends the same benefits of His act of salvation for all. On these terms salvation is offered; indeed it is in these terms, that is, the recreation of God's family, that salvation is defined. Therefore in saving me God binds me to all those who have put their faith in Jesus, and I can enjoy the Presence of Jesus only in so far as I share it with those whose fellowship God offers to me. This does not mean that I cannot know the Presence of Jesus in my own private devotions, but it does mean that this com-

munion is an extension of that communion which I enjoy in the fellowship of the Church. It also means that if I seek to break the fellowship of the Church I stand in danger of forfeiting the Presence of Jesus.

(b) The word by which Jesus comes into our midst is not a Word which I can tell to myself. We must understand that we are to take seriously the manner of our salvation. God became a man amongst men, and made humanity the vehicle in which He chose to carry the Gospel. This means that the news of salvation is to be transmitted by the normal means of human communication, by people telling to others what they have seen and heard. I know my Saviour only because in the first place someone else told me about Him. I know Him better when others share their knowledge and experience with me. Of course we can read the Bible by ourselves and hear the Word of God in it for ourselves, but the Bible is not rightly understood if it is regarded as a book of private interpretation. Constantly we need to correct our interpretations by the conversation of the People of God and by the gathered wisdom of the Church.

And so Jesus promises that where two or three are gathered together in His Name, there He will be in their midst, bringing them into One Body to share that which He freely gives to all. This incorporation is not an optional extra which goes along with salvation, but is part of that same complex of activities by which God saves us. Therefore to harm that fellowship into which God has placed us and which He prepared for us, or to seek to withdraw from it or to ignore it or to spurn it, is not a matter of equalising the scores with our supposed opponents, but it is an act which cuts at the very root of our salvation.

Here in South India where the Church seems to be bedevilled by so many party squabbles, we perhaps need to learn again the lesson which our patron saint, St. Thomas, learned. For more than a week after the first Easter Sunday Thomas kept himself apart from the other disciples. He may have thought that he had excellent reasons for doing so, but the fact remains that during this period he alone did not meet the Risen Jesus. It was only when Thomas came back into the fellowship of the Church that Jesus came and revealed Himself to him. That is precisely what Jesus meant and what He still promises. 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'

(This sermon on 'The Church' and the one on 'Baptism' in the last issue were preached in Medak Cathedral on the 17th and 24th of July. They are not offered as examples of the preacher's art, nor do they claim to be original in either thought, word, structure nor conclusion. For 'The Church' I relied heavily on 'When Christ Comes and Comes again', by T. F. Torrance, Hodder and Stoughton 1957, and for 'Baptism' on 'Crisis for Baptism' Ed. Basil S. Moss, S.C.M. 1965.)

GORDON SHAW.

C.S.I. Overseas Mission to Thailand

Kroo Toon, My Leper Friend

During this term of ours, our Mission in Thailand is mainly to live and work among the Leprosy people, though our services reach far outside the Leprosy field in many ways. We are living right among the lepers, for our home is located in the McKean Leprosy Hospital, where there are about 600 patients, both men and women. All day long we are surrounded by leprosy people, who walk and work quite close to our house, and enter our premises very often.

This means that we should be extra careful with regard to our children who may get contact with these patients very easily.

My work among the leprosy people may be divided into two kinds. I teach in the Leprosy Bible-school, not far away from our home, where there are nine students this year. This includes not only class-room teaching, but the care of their physical as well as spiritual affairs at all hours. Many

times these students travel with me in the Landrover. Quite often we eat together as one family, sometimes we sleep under the same roof when we go to visit Leprosy churches, and twice in a week we gather together to make a report of Sunday-work, to share one another's burdens and experiences and to present everything at the Throne of grace. This dreadful disease has deformed many of their faces, some cannot write properly nor can they walk aright because their fingers and toes have been eaten by this disease. But these patients are really patient, and almost every one of them is earnestly dedicated to God and His service.

Another kind of work among the leprosy people is to be the pastor of about 10 leprosy churches in the country at various places of this province. The farthest is about 100 miles from here and the nearest over 25 miles. Administering Holy Sacraments, delivering God's messages, visiting homes and presiding over their church committee meetings are my usual pastoral duties. But to arrange and conduct annual Revival meetings in many of these churches is a new item which I have introduced, that always has brought good results. Here is the story of one such programme.

Kroo Toon Rededicates

Rong Nam is the name of that village, which has about 15 Christian leprosy families. Kroo Toon is the teacher and evangelist of this church for the past many years. (Kroo means Teacher). We went as a group of 5 to 6 people. All were Bible-students except myself and Mrs. Manickam. The students helped in leading Bible-study for the adults, teaching Bible stories for children and conducting singing practices. I was the preacher in these three days and each time I used flannel-graph pictures, which attract village people. This was the first time that church ever had such meetings, and Kroo Toon took keen interest in bringing the people to the church, to keep them in order during the meetings and he was leading the members in finding and reading the Bible-texts at the time of Bible-study and preaching hours. God immensely blessed our meetings. At the final meeting I called the people to dedicate and rededicate their lives to Christ by their open prayers. There

were about 6 or 7 people who prayed aloud dedicating their lives to God, probably some of them prayed for the first time in their lives in the presence of other people. Kroo Toon also began to pray, but with prayers. He wept and confessed his sins, and asked for the help of God to lead a better and useful life since then. The meetings came to a close in a great silence, but with a deep inward joy and peace which could be seen in the face of the whole congregation.

Kroo Toon, a Dedicated Evangelist and Worker

From that day onwards Kroo Toon began to take more interest and care in the church work at Rong Nam. Besides, there is a new group of Christians of nine members, 3 miles from Rong Nam, who accepted the Lord through Baptism within the last two years. This group sprang up by the grace of God and our feeble efforts, which group has no shepherd to take spiritual care of them. Kroo Toon volunteered to go and visit them, and conduct worship services on Sunday afternoons. Leprosy had eaten some of his fingers, and his legs were crippled. Yet, he used to ride on his old bicycle to visit these new Christians regularly. He didn't expect any remuneration for this extra service, but very recently I myself have begun to pay him a small amount.

Kroo Toon is a leper. He is a lover of Christ and a true servant of God. He is a great friend of mine. But he is only one among many devoted leprosy friends in our field.

We request your sympathy for this society of crippled people.

We expect your support for this high cause of our Lord and Saviour.

We need your prayers for the great task we are engaged in.

May God's richest blessings rest upon you all.

Yours in His service,

J. T. Paul Manickam,
Box 5, Chiangmai, Thailand.

Letters to the Editor

Redundant Churches

My dear Bishop,

I have read with great interest the article on 'Redundant Churches' by the Rev. R. W. Rentoul in the June issue of *The South India Churchman*. He has raised certain matters which need careful attention and I take this opportunity to express my views which may provoke further discussion on the subject.

In defence of his suggestion to close down some of the C.S.I. Churches he gives the following reasons: We have no congregations to fill the churches; we have no money to maintain them and we have no Presbyters to staff them. Why then go outside India for financial help when the resources are at our hands? Economics and not sentiment should be the deciding factor.

It is perfectly true that we have on our hands a legacy of a number of large churches which it is indeed very expensive to maintain, but we need not despair. I am glad that there is money among the well-to-do Indian Christians. It is good that quite a number of our young men are employed in business concerns and earn handsome salaries and if only we know how to approach them, the response for a good cause is

usually splendid. I have observed this in Madras and I have no doubt it is true in other cities also.

For the sake of economy to hold the services of two churches in one is not so easy. The C.S.I. Constitution permits each united church to continue to follow its own form of worship. The Anglican and Methodist traditions are different. Therefore, in such a situation the only way would be for each congregation to hold its own service at a different hour. Some womenfolk who would like to attend the late service, may be unable to do so because on them depends the major part of cooking. After all, the majority of middle class Christians cannot afford cooks these days.

It is also true that the response to the call to the Ministry is poor. Recently I read somewhere that only one candidate was forthcoming for the whole of Karnataka! Parents, Presbyters, Christian leaders, are, I am afraid, largely responsible for this unhappy state of affairs. It is time that all concerned should bestow serious thought on how to resolve this problem if we Christians are really in earnest to obey Christ's call.

Now, coming to the crux of the question, namely, the

suggestion to close down half empty churches, may I ask Mr. Rentoul if he has any statistical evidence that nearly all C.S.I. Churches, for instance in Bangalore, are half empty? Has he ascertained the reasons for such seeming apathy? There may be many reasons. May I give one instance in my own experience which may give a clue to this? In June 1963, three of us, a Baptist, an Anglican, and a Methodist, (now all members of the C.S.I.) attended a City church. It happened to be a Communion service and we gladly stayed on. We had attended this church off and on for many years. It had always been the custom in this church to serve wine in individual cups. We were, therefore, not a little surprised when a large silver cup with wine was brought round to us. Being contrary to the established tradition of this church, we wondered if the communicant members were consulted and their approval taken to make this big change or whether the new practice was being pushed down their throats. Some-time later when I attended the same church, I found that the choir had disappeared. I must admit that the choir at best of times was neither large nor good. But surely, a young Minister if he had a genuine desire to improve the musical talent in the church, should he not have taken the trouble to explore what was lying dormant and give opportunities to develop it rather than dismissing the choir? Of course, it was so much easier to destroy than to resuscitate! During the last two years I have attended the same church on several occasions, and I have found the congregation much smaller; old familiar faces had gone away perhaps in search of new pastures. If similar things are happening in other churches and the Ministers ride roughshod on the feelings of the members, why blame the congregations?

Granting that most churches are only half full at present, have we no vision, no faith that in God's good time the membership may swell due to the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit? Are we—I include Ministers too—by our faithlessness and lukewarmness hindering such a thing from coming to pass? Even from a commonsense point of view, when the Indian population is increasing by leaps and bounds, is it reasonable to expect that only our churches will continue to be half empty while temples and mosques would be overflowing?

I am truly sorry, Dear Editor, that I have made this letter so long but I crave your indulgence because this is my first offence!

Yours sincerely,
D. ANANDA RAO

EPISCOPACY

Dear Sir,

One of the factors that serve to complicate our admittedly nightmare-ish situation is the number of people who provide 'analyses' of our condition shaped not so much by genuine research as by a desire to drum up trade for their own pet remedies. This remark is prompted by a reading of the article in your July number 'Episcopacy in the Church of South India' by Dr. A. J. George—an article which professes to offer us a blueprint for a more perfect constitution without any mention of God and without using the word 'obedience'. Although the plan sketched in a short article is necessarily not entirely clear, it does seem to provide for a Church that answers the needs of unredeemed men rather than for one that calls them to the obligations of the loving fellowship of God.

If we may take his 'fifth factor' as a fair example of Dr. George's analytical method, it may be that he has concrete evidence to show beyond all doubt that an *overwhelming majority* (he allows only 'rare exceptions') of the missionaries who have come to India in the last ten years are 'exploiting the situation to their own advantage, by way of personal aggrandizement'. If he has such

evidence then we must respect his judgment. If he has not, then all his other 'factors'—which are, for the most part, similarly based on the assumption that any power granted by the constitution is automatically misused—are equally suspect with this and the whole article, instead of being a contribution to the better understanding of the Church's plight becomes yet another example of unhelpful irresponsibility.

Yours faithfully,

J. G. MARSDEN.

CSI, Gooty,
11th July 1966.

ARE INDEPENDENT LAYMEN WANTED?

I

Dear Sir,

Of course, they *are* wanted. Who said that they are not wanted? We certainly want them but truth compels me to say, 'Not all of them'.

Mr. Rajaiah D. Paul has done a splendid service to the Church by calling attention to this important aspect. That the Church takes serious notice of his point of view is proved by the fact that the Right Rev. Dr. Lesslie Newbigin has sent out a circular to all the Presbyters in the Diocese of Madras, saying that it is his responsibility, in consultation with his Executive committee, to nominate up to 30 lay members to the Diocesan Council. He adds that he wishes to include a good number of laymen and laywomen, who are not in the paid employment of the Church, but who, by their life and conduct are fit to sit on the Councils of the Church. And so he asks the Presbyters to suggest the names of such people. I have myself given him the names of three such lay persons.

The trouble with Mr. Paul is that he thinks that all independent laymen are like himself—efficient and honest in Government service and after retirement, keen on promoting the welfare of the Church. In fact, some independent laymen, by their conduct in public service or in the professions, are a disgrace to the Christian religion: they are inefficient and corrupt and totally irreligious. Some of them are clever bribe-takers but others not so clever and get caught. Such people destroy the reputation which Christians of integrity laboriously build up. How can we use such so-called Christians in the administration of the Church?

Of course, independent laymen of the right sort will certainly be of great help. They can bring into the church some of the 'secular' virtues, such as, honesty in things big and small, their severe condemnation of all misappropriations and misuse of church property, their efficiency in administration and their ability to think ahead and plan.

But even such good laymen have the defects of their virtues, chiefly, a lack of sympathy with persons not so efficient, their incapacity to place themselves in the shoes of Presbyters and whole-time churchworkers and their not-often-justified assumption of superiority in intelligence. Having been accustomed to a different manner of life in their secular occupations with higher emoluments and liberal pensions, it is difficult for them to come down to the level of poorly paid Presbyters.

Mr. Paul contends that where the word 'laymen' is used in the Constitution of the Church of South India, the *intention* of the Church was that it should mean independent laymen, excluding laymen in the whole-time service of the Church and other Christian institutions. This, I maintain, is an unwarranted inference. Laymen, of course means all those who are not ordained, in whatever service they may be engaged. This does not mean that I do not want independent laymen in the administration of the church. By all means, let us have them, provided that they are the

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right sort of men. There is no special virtue in being an independent layman. Everything depends on his quality. If he is really interested in the welfare of the church, he can exercise tremendous influence. Such good influences do not depend on the number of laymen on the Synod etc. One man of outstanding spiritual power can sway the whole Synod or Diocesan council.

What I emphatically repudiate is the suggestion that men in Diocesan service should be excluded because they could not be expected to express independent views. Mr. Paul is thinking of the olden days when the Missionary was more or less a dictator, though in most cases a benevolent one. Things have now changed considerably. Our Bishops have practically no power over the laymen in Diocesan service. And therefore such laymen feel free to express their opinions without fear or favour.

If Mr. Paul's contention that 'laymen' means 'independent laymen' and that none but such independent laymen should have a voice in the administration of the church, is carried to its logical conclusion, it will exclude all the Presbyters and Bishops as well, since they are interested parties! If Mr. Paul had his way, the church would be administered by a handful of independent laymen. Some of these men, who are accustomed to exercise authority may turn out to be tyrant and lord it over the Clergy. I know of one such lay Treasurer, who took his Presbyter to task, because the latter spent excessive wine at Holy communion service, calculating the quantity from the number of communicants and allotting a sip for each communicant! Apart from the meanness of such a procedure, what that lay Treasurer did not understand was that some members of the congregation take more than a sip each!

Some independent laymen would like their Pastors to dance to their tune. But woe to those Pastors who try to please such laymen. Their tragic end would be the same as that of the man in Aesop's fable, who in trying to please everybody finally carried the donkey on his back, who kicked him into the river! A true Presbyter can only dance to the tune of God but he is sure to end in the long run in winning the confidence of all the decent members of his congregation, though there will still be a few incorrigibles who can never be satisfied!

Mr. Paul's patient efforts to count up independent laymen in the last synod held at Kottayam deserve our appreciation and even our admiration. But his references to the presence of the wives of the Bishops as delegates to the Synod are rather hard on the Bishops. I am sure that no Bishop would ever have manoeuvred the presence of their wives at the Synod! Mr. Paul asks cynically, 'Is it to give moral support to the Bishops?' This is the unkindest cut of all. To Mr. Paul's credit, however, it must be said that during his Secretaryship and at his instance, the Synod Executive resolved to permit the wives of the Bishops to attend the Synod as Visitors and to draw travel allowance from the Synod funds. It is an excellent idea to allow the wives to come to the Synod so that they may know what all problems their husbands are facing. Incidentally, they can also look after the creature comforts of the Bishops during the Synod, even as they do at home. This also made possible the very pleasant and indeed unique group photo of the C.S.I. Bishops and their wives, which appeared in *The South India Churchman*, July 1966. It is certain that the wives of Anglican Bishops in England will look with envy on their counterparts in South India!

There is no need for any Bishop to manipulate the presence of his wife at the Synod: because, on their own right, they are permitted to attend as Visitors. But if they are actually elected as *delegates*, I suppose it is done at the instance of a group of Diocesan women, who admire and love the wife of their Bishop and who show their regard by electing her as a delegate! But still Mr. Paul's point

holds good that the Bishop could have explained to the Diocesan Council that his wife would in any case be present at the Synod as a Visitor and that in her place a lay person could be elected!

We thank Mr. Paul for his courageous advocacy of a point which has not so far been faced boldly by the Church. I am sure that things will certainly get better, now that he has drawn our attention to the matter. If in the course of his advocacy, he has erred by over-emphasising certain points, it is indeed pardonable.

St. John's Church,

Pondicherry.

THOMAS SITTHER

II.

Dear Editor,

I am writing this with reference to Mr. R. D. Paul's scathing disapproval of the presence of paid laymen on the Synod and other Councils of the Church of South India and your editorial comments on it.

My purpose here is not to oppose or to argue against Mr. Paul's denunciation. He has had long experience and inside knowledge of the working of the Synod and Diocesan bodies and of Church affairs in general. I also wish that more and more laymen at work in the world outside the Church should accept responsibility for the work of the Church including its administration. However, I should like to raise the question whether both Mr. Paul's outburst and what I may call your 'counter-burst' (raising the shades of Henry VIII and his like) do not unfortunately cover up the real issues that must be faced in and by the Church—whether you are not both engrossed with the symptoms and allowing the disease to run its course.

You find Mr. Paul's harsh generalisations about paid laymen who serve on Church Councils shockingly unfair; but they are possibly deliberate overstatements in the manner of Bernard Shaw which are intended to shock and scandalize and not to state facts as they are. Thus, while Mr. Paul writes as if there is a conspiracy to pack the Synod and Diocesan Bodies with paid laymen, it would be nearer the truth to say that it comes much easier, not only to the clergy and paid laymen but also to the independent laymen, to pitch upon able or willing representatives from among the laity in the service of the Diocese than to search for such counsellors among the 'independent' laity.

You have pointed out that even on the analogy of management and labour the denial of the privilege of membership in Church Councils to the paid laity would not be in accordance with wise policies and developing conventions. It would also be at variance with the new ecumenical insights on the composition of the Church. If Mr. Paul's thesis was pressed, bishop and clergy should also not be members of the Synod and Church Committees because they are even more directly employees of the Church than the paid laity. But the Holy Spirit seems to be pointing these days in just the opposite direction towards the unification of God's people who have so far been divided by denominations and hierarchies.

Beneath the disagreement over the segregation of paid and independent laity Mr. Paul and you are agreed that the laymen of either category who get into the Synod or other Councils in the C.S.I. must be men 'of conscience'. But how can this be achieved? It is counting without human nature (of both electors and nominees) to hope that somehow such men will be readily picked out by the electing bodies. Sad to say, our actual experience in many dioceses of the C.S.I., if not all, is that the motives and considerations which come into play in Church elections are as unworthy as those which govern political elections. It is not quite naive to believe that if only independent laymen chose members of the administrative bodies from among them-

selves, they would choose 'conscientious' men? What is there to prevent corrupt men and lovers of power from getting themselves elected? Do we not know of independent laymen who, being used to bossing and patronising elsewhere, try to lord it over the Church, too, as Mr. Paul himself wrote, some years ago? Or, in the reverse, have 'independent' laymen not worked off their frustrations and feelings of inferiority or of failure in their professions by jockeying into executive power in their dioceses?

Lust for power and positions of patronage is by no means confined to the paid laity and clergy. A few years ago an official in Central Government service said that he had achieved his life's ambition when he had managed to get elected to all the important Committees in his diocese. It must also be borne in mind that it is after they have had a taste of power that most men let their conscience become blunted or perverted and begin to do all the wrong things for which Mr. Paul holds the paid laity and the 'colluding' clergy responsible.

It is a truism that people get only the governments and representative bodies they deserve. Whether the Synods and Church Councils have more of paid or independent laymen on them the integrity and sense of responsibility of their members will depend on the spiritual state of the whole church. Actually, therefore, we are caught in a vicious circle. A spiritually backward church cannot produce or appoint representatives who will be men 'of conscience'. And when the wrong type of men get elected they cannot help the church to make any spiritual progress. The only hope of breaking out of the vicious circle is for the church to give up preoccupation with administration and questions of constitutional rights and sanctions and to try to find out instead what God wants the whole church and not merely its clergy or Synod or administrative bodies to be doing. So long as administration is an end in itself or only the Church Committees carry the responsibility for the task of the church there can be little hope of any purposeful action by the church as a whole in relation to the call of God.

Employing brilliant imagery you have described Mr. Paul's proposals as dropping of the pilot. It is a nightmare to you that the crew should be ordered ashore and that those who have never been seamen should take charge of the ship. But, if I may say so, your ship is a nightmare even with the old crew aboard; for it does not seem to carry any passengers or cargo or to have any destination. It seems to be rather like a 'ghost ship' in a story in the *Readers' Digest* which started steaming about after its engines had been silenced and the crew had got off it when it had become ice-bound. The controversy over who should sit on Church Committees and who should not is very much like arguing whether the crew of the ships that bring foodgrains to India should be Negro or White or Indian. The important thing about the church is not who is in control where, but where the whole church is moving (if it is moving at all) and why.

If the clergy and all categories of laity could get together in congregations and ask themselves what they ought, as the church, to make of the explosions of freedom, knowledge, ideologies and antagonisms in the world that is their home and field of activity that would make the church much more like what it is in the intention of God than actions of Synods and other Councils. It will be a great day—a turning point for the C.S.I. when laymen with the zeal of Mr. Paul and bishops and other clerical leaders of thought of your calibre can unite forces and issue a stirring call to the church for such a *Koinonia* of search for the purposes of God and of dedicated action for their achievement.

Yours Sincerely,
D. A. THANGASAMY.

Dear Sir,

With interest and great astonishment I have just read and reread the article in the June *South India Churchman*, 'Are independent laymen wanted?'

The first misunderstanding seems to me the interpretation of the 'ministry of the laity' as serving on Committees and in Councils as main occupation. Did the N.T. and the Reformers understand the 'ministry of the laity' like that?

Is not the primary ministry of the 'laos'—the people of God—carrying the work of loving care and evangelism to those around us, to our actual neighbours? Each Christian in secular employment is a much more suitable missionary (—one being sent to preach, to teach and to heal) than any of us, who come from overseas.

Serving on committees and in Councils seems to me only secondary. Mr. Paul stipulates 3 conditions for the right participation of lay people. In the 2 of them he mentions that 'layfolk . . . seek to serve on committees . . .' I think, there is already something wrong. For an office in the Church one should be chosen, elected, unless offers of people are asked for especially. One should not seek an office or even canvass for it!!

He is quite right, there should be far more lay people in secular employment actively engaged in Church-work (see para above about 'church-work') and even in Committees and Councils. Why are they not? Do the congregations at the elections keep them out purposely? I don't think so. At least in our Diocese (Dornakal) I remember several times how independent lay people were elected, they accepted the election gladly—and then some of them never did anything about it, neither any work nor came they to any committee meetings. What good was it then to elect them again? Only to have their names on the list?—(But we have other very active independent lay people, who do first of all church-work and therefore they are again and again elected into committees and councils.)

In the 3rd stipulation he gives as reason for demanding *only* independent lay people for the decisive committees and councils ' . . . that no layman, who is in any sense an employee of the Church will be free to express his own mind, . . . etc.'

To this I can only say: I thank God, that I have met Indian brethren and sisters who have enough courage to stand to their conscientious opinions, even should these differ from those of their superiors!

And then his last amazing demand, that no lay person in Church-employment should have any seat or voice in the administration of the Church at all.

If he had demanded, that no foreign missionaries should have a seat on such bodies, I could have perhaps understood it on the ground, that the CSI is an Indian Church and should therefore be governed by Nationals only.

Yet he agrees, that the Clergy have a place in the administration of the Church. But are the ministers—the presbyters—not in the same way employees of the Church? (Who is 'the Church' in anyway? The Bishop??)

Or does he think that the ordination may have given the presbyters a greater integrity than we lay people in Church-employment could ever achieve?

And where is the measure of the integrity of the independent lay people? May I remind you, that most of us professional people, who serve the Church, could get in secular employ salaries 2, 3, or even 4 times as high as in the Church! For some of us it is a real sacrifice to be in Church-employment instead of being 'independent lay people'!

Now to the last stipulation, that NO Church-institution should be governed by their own staff and the correspon-

(Continued on cover p. 3)

THE DIOCESES



MADURAI-RAMNAD

Presbyters' Wives Retreat

The Madurai-Ramnad Diocese held its Annual Retreat for Presbyters' Wives this year at Vaigai Dam from August 19-21. Thirty people took part in it. It was a time of happy fellowship and sharing of experiences. This year the women's work superintendents of our Local Councils were invited as guests, and it proved very worthwhile to have them with us, as their work is closely united with the work which the pastors' wives are doing.

We had 'Prayer' as the theme of our retreat, and Sister Koilmani Abel from Madras Diocese was our main speaker. She gave us three very useful addresses which will surely help us to want to learn to pray better, and learn to do the will of God. She also taught us many songs. Rev. J. S. Paranjothy took Bible study for us and the Local Council Chairman Rev. Arthur Lawley and his wife worked very hard to make all the arrangements for our hospitality etc. go smoothly.

It was a lovely place to be, and we felt grateful for the relaxation, the fresh air, the abundant water, and the beautiful scenery. We all attended the local Church on Sunday Morning and met the congregation, and sang to them, too. Our Bishop led our closing service and consecration and talked to us about prayer. We were specially happy to have two new young pastors' wives with us this year and of course we had a special item to welcome the new brides! This is the ninth year we have held this retreat, and we surely feel it helps to draw into a close knit fellowship these women who are called of God to this rather special service in His Church.

SISTER CELIA BARBER.

Missionary Festival and Sale

The Madurai Diocese celebrated its Annual Missionary Festival on August 6th and 7th. Over a period of 6 years we have attempted to build up a live interest in the missionary work of the CSI throughout our Diocese. We now have about 52 missionary secretaries in pastorates and institutions,—who organise prayer and financial help in their local areas. They meet twice a year and report on their work and are given information about the latest developments in the missionary work of our church, which they can pass on to people in their areas.

Every year now we had a special service of prayer and thanksgiving for

our missionary work, and at the same time we have a sale in which people from all corners of the Diocese participate. This year it was held as usual in the grounds of O.C.P.M. High School, Madurai, from morning till evening. It was a colourful sight with decorations, exhibition of charts depicting the churches' mission fields, and colourful stalls of sweetmeats, and gay goods for sale. Pottery and dried fish from Ramnad District, baskets from Konkanadu, vegetables and fruits from Kodai, were all very tempting. Mrs. Hensman, the acting Principal of Lady Doak College, opened the sale and spoke of the importance of co-operation in an effort like this. And certainly a happy spirit of doing a worthwhile job together pervaded the whole day, and we think more people than ever attended.

We had a service of Prayer and Thanksgiving the next day in Christ Church, conducted by the Bishop and the Presbyter of the church. Rev. Thavaraj David spoke on the Missionary task of the Church. The members of that congregation took the lead in arranging and helping with the sale this year. The total profit goes up steadily year by year—this year the figure is considerably higher than last year's; with some contributions still to come; as this goes to print, it stands at Rs. 7,400.

SISTER CELIA BARBER.

MYSORE

Bishop's Tour Notes

In March there was a tour of 1,250 miles to Mangalore to attend the K.T.C. Council, to Mandagadde for the Management Committee of the Caring Home, then to the N. Karnataka Area where there were eight Confirmation services and one Ordination service. The tour ended with the inauguration of the Krupalaya Leprosy Unit at Guledgud, representing the astonishing

achievements of Dr. A. W. Rutgers and his team of workers. At Dharwar a day was spent with the educational institutions. We also visited a Boarding Home just being started (not by CSI) for Tibetan boys and also the NTTF Technical Training School. Plans for the CSI Arts and Science College were discussed. Although delayed there is a quiet confidence that the College will be started in due course. At Hubli there was an open air public meeting at which the Bishop of Belgaum (RC) and I both spoke.

At Chikmagalur, during my next tour in April, the Bishop of Chikmagalur (RC) and I spoke at a meeting arranged by the CSI Youth Guild of St Andrew's Church. There were Confirmation services on the coffee estates and in Chikmagalur. The Revs. S. Sundararaju and J. R. Henry have been transferred to Mysore. They have done excellent work in this area, which involves so much difficult travel, and will be greatly missed both on the estates and in Chikmagalur. The Rev. K. V. Shantaram has been elected as Chairman of the Hassan Area Council for one year.

At the Confirmation service in Chikmagalur the church was full at the end of the service which is in contrast to some of the city churches where the church can be practically empty for the last hymn. The only people who should be asked to leave the church after the first benediction are the excommunicates. All other baptised people have a right to stay throughout the service. Even if they do not communicate, they can share in the worship with their ears, their voices, their looks and their gestures. This means that we must have hymns and lyrics in which the congregation may join. Karnataka music must be set and sung to all the congregational responses such as 'Therefore with angels and archangels' and 'Thy death O Lord we commemorate' and so on. The Offertory should be taken at its proper place after the Kiss of Peace. This will also shorten the service and encourage people to remain until the final benediction.

Famine and Relief

In May I went to Kastur and Hadya where the S.C.M. had arranged a work camp to help in the famine relief work. The results have been quite spectacular. It is true that at Hadya relief work for the improvement of the village had already been taken up before the students arrived, especially the restoration of the catchment system by which the rain water is collected in the village tank.

This had been so well done that shortly after the students arrived, the heavy rains on May 1st caused this tank to overflow, and the students worked with 200 villagers in strengthening the dam so that the village was not flooded. They then took part in road making work.

At Kastur, the students with the help of 20 villagers dug a canal of about 4 furlongs to the Kellamballi road, which will bring all the rain water from this to the catchment tank, from which the large tank in the village will be filled. These were both deepened and repaired. The interesting thing is that this tank (Kastur) was empty, but the Hadya tank full, because work had been done there before the heavy rain on May 1st. Is it true that in other villages ways by which people got sufficient water in old days have been neglected and could be restored? Concerning this and other matters the students made a survey and collected other information.

There has been some disappointment that the supplies of grain promised by CORAGS did not arrive in time, owing to delays on the railway, and that the relief work in other places could not be taken up. But these supplies are now arriving and feeding centres have been opened and relief work started in other places. How useful such work can be made has already been explained above. We are grateful to the Rev. D. J. Harris for all the work he has put into these schemes and are grateful that Deacon H. M. Duke has been appointed to to carry on these while Mr. Harris is on furlough.

Shimoga

While at Shimoga we visited the Kerala Refugees' Camp, and hope that by now they have been provided with fresh lands to cultivate or stronger huts in which to shelter from the heavy rains. They are mostly Syrian Catholic Christians. Food is now being provided by various organizations. But when they were very short of food in May, our Area Chairman arrived in a Jeep loaded with sacks of rice purchased with a grant from our own Famine & Relief Fund.

Between June 1st and 3rd at Shimoga fifty boys from the Shimoga and N. Karnataka Areas were admitted to the new Boarding Home established in the old bungalow there. The Rev. S. Ernest and the Rev. T. Devadatta did a tremendous task in making all the arrangements. From July 1st it will be called the 'Bornmann-Nightingale Home' and will have its own Constitution and Management Committee, also its own Warden, Mr. J. S. Abraham, B.A., formerly assistant master at the Wardlaw High School, Bellary, and the son of the Rev. H. D. L. Abraham. It has been named after the Rev. A. E. Nightingale,

a pioneer missionary at Shimoga, who built the hospital at Mandagadde and started schools and boarding homes for boys in that area, and after Mr. Bornmann, the founder of the Kindernothilfe organization in Germany, which will support, through individual sponsors, children in this and our other boarding homes.

Hunsur and Mandya

At Heggadadevankote in the Hunsur Pastorate, the surrounding jungle is being given out for cultivation. Christians who have been out of touch with Church life have been discovered there. Some have been baptized, others confirmed. The Tahsildar, who is a Christian, allows his house to be used for worship. He will be able to allot more land in this taluq to people who are willing first to stay at Heggadadevankote and get a residential qualification. At Hundimala in the Hunsur Taluq a group of people who had settled in land allotted to them in the jungle, have built a prayer hall and a house for a retired minister, the Rev. S. Premaka, who unfortunately will have to remain in Hunsur, as the Rev. D. Pushparaju has been transferred to Brucepettah, Bellary. He has done a very useful work in these out-stations of the Hunsur Pastorate, which I visited in May with him. Please pray for him as he begins his new work at Bellary.

Pentecost was spent in the Mandya Pastorate, where I heard for the first time the Karnataka music composed for the congregational responses in the C.S.I. Communion Service by Mr. M. Sundrappa, which guarantees its musical excellence. In the afternoon we visited the new congregation in this pastorate at Besagarahalli, where more of the people who were baptized last year were confirmed. Others had been confirmed soon after their baptism last year. So this new congregation has, from its beginning, been receiving Holy Communion regularly, and has made good progress under the Rev. S. James.

Organists—Good and Bad

Edgar Fewkes, the Organist at St. Mark's Cathedral, passed away on June 28th. He played for the service at which the Mysore Diocese was inaugurated in 1947, at my Consecration in 1951, and at most of the early Ordination Services. He much appreciated the fine singing of the Kannada hymns. Few Churches have had the good fortune to have such a good Organist and some Churches have the great misfortune to have Organists who spoil the singing of the congregation. It would be a blessing if Pastorate Committees terminate the service of any Organist who cannot play properly, or is unable to read western music, or who tries to play western music on a harmonium meant only for Indian music.

Another way would be to sell away the Organ.

N. C. SARGANT,
Bishop.

Union Kanarese Seminary, Tumkur

Golden Jubilee Celebration—5th August 1916—5th August 1966

Famous for 50 years, protected and enriched by three missions and churches, consecrated by the prayers of its pioneer builders and glorified by the songs and kalakshepams of many past students, the Union Kanarese Seminary has continued to be a dynamic centre of spiritual life and has served the needs of the churches in ancient Karnataka and the present Mysore State.

With its combination of Western and Indian architecture, its huge pillars and carvings at the entrance, it is rightly called a *Veda Matha*. Its pleasant climate, and large open compound have provided a congenial atmosphere for the study of the Bible and meditation.

The Golden Jubilee Celebrations were held from 2nd to 5th August 1966 commemorating the first opening on 5th August 1916 and 50 years of service. The functions were held under the Chairmanship of Bishop Sargent.

A three-day refresher course was arranged prior to the function, when eminent members of staff from other Theological Colleges were invited to give lectures. The Rev. S. Ananda Kumar from the Karnataka Theological College, Mangalore, gave 3 lectures on Romans with special emphasis on 1. The Righteousness of God, 2. The Universality of Sin, and 3. The Justification by Faith. Justification is a verdict of a Righteous God when He declared a sinful man as righteous because of his faith in Jesus Christ was his theme.

The Rev. R. Scheuermeier, Principal of the Karnataka Theological College, Mangalore, gave 3 lectures on Theology, Church and the State depicting the background of the Early Church and relation between the Church and the State and clarifying the relation of the Indian Church in our Secular and Democratic State. He challenged us to the supreme task of our Witness and Mission of the Church in our Secular State.

The Rev. K. Baago of the United Theological College, Bangalore, gave two lectures on the 'Early Church and the Indian Church' depicting the growth of the Indian Church from the Dawn of the Protestant Missions in India and emphasized the express duty and urgency of the Indian Church to interpret LOGOS-CHRIST in terms of Indian thought. To express LOGOS in terms that are highest and noblest in Hinduism is the urgency of the hour.

On August 5th a Ceremonial Entrance was arranged when all the past students dressed in white robes marched from the main gate of the compound to the main entrance of the Seminary. On arriving at the entrance Psalm 24 was read aloud 'Lift up your heads, O ye Gates, and ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in'.

On entering the seminary the principal gave a Report of the work of the Institution including the past history of those who had gone from the portals of the institution, remembering the significant contribution of the earlier staff members like the Revds. E. W. Thompson, the architect and builder, W. H. Thorp, W. E. Tomlinson, W. Perston, A. Brockbank, F. E. Hill, Bp. H. Sumitra, Bp. P. Gurushantha, P. J. Child, C. B. Firth, H. Sheelappa, A. M. Bhaskara, A. R. Bangalore, H. A. Pitts, B. Nilajagi, Jayaprabhu, G. Wesley, J. Bhaktisiromani, H. D. Luther Abraham, S. Ananda Kumar and B. J. Chintamani. The present staff includes the Rev. C. L. Furtado, Miss S.I. Bailey and the Principal Rev. K. T. Shanta Raj.

The principal gave a summary of the total number of graduates of the seminary. It was gratifying to note that the seminary had trained and sent out into the field 200 men. Out of these 130 belonged originally to the Wesleyan Mission, London Mission and Basel Mission (now C.S.I.) and 70 belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Nearly 50% of the Methodist ministers are Seminary graduates and nearly 66% of the ordained men in the C.S.I. Mysore Diocese are Seminary graduates.

Bishop Sargent, a colleague of some of the earlier principals explained the significant and outstanding features of the past history of the Seminary, the situation which had arisen from the dearth of recruits for training to the ministry.

A TUMKUR OLD STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION was formed in order to maintain the fellowship of the old students.

An arrangement was devised to receive a Golden Jubilee Collection in covers at multiples of 50 in memory of the 50 years of service of the Seminary. The collection amounted to Rs. 250. With this amount as the nucleus, a Golden Jubilee Fund was created, which will be administered by the Old Students' Association.

K. T. SHANTHA RAJ
Principal.

TIRUCHIRAPALLI-TANJORE DIOCESE

Convention for the Church Workers

The Diocesan Convention for the Church Workers, including all the Pres-

byters, Deacons, Evangelists, Women Workers and the heads of various institutions in the Diocese was held at Karur on the 9th, 10th and 11th August, 1966. 'EVANGELISM' was the theme of this Convention. Mr. Theodore Williams, M.A., B.D., and Mr. Ponnu A. Sathiasatchi, M.A., B.O.L., were the speakers of this Convention. The Bible study, which was based on the theme of the Convention, was led by the Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Solomon Doraisawmy, B.A., L.T., B.D., every morning.

'The Biblical Basis of Evangelism'

'The Theology of Evangelism'

'The Qualities of an Evangelist'

'The Church and Evangelism'

'The Evangelistic Work to be done by the Church as a whole and by some of the paid Workers'

'The Methods of Evangelism'

These were the topics that Mr. Théodore Williams has spoken in the Convention.

'Explaining the Gospel to the Hindus in the philosophical background of Advaita and Saivasidanta'

'Modern Movements in Tamilnad and the Evangelism'

'Syncretism and Evangelism'

These were the topics spoken by Mr. Ponnu A. Sathiasatchi. One can imagine on seeing the head-lines as to how the talks would have inspired the minds of the attendants. Everyone was moved by the Holy Spirit while these talks were delivered.

A huge procession was arranged on the second day of the Convention, in which the local congregation and the schools took part. Lyrics were sung; tracts were distributed and the Biblical verses were proclaimed when the procession was on. A kalakshebam was arranged and Mr. Ponnu A. Sathiasatchi led the kalakshebam on the 'Divine Love'. This moved the whole crowd. This was a great witness to the non-Christians in Karur.

An editorial board was formed to write down the talks with a view to have these topics printed and distributed to all the congregations in the Diocese. This, we hope, would stimulate the zeal and enthusiasm of Evangelism.

'Thy Kingdom come'

G. GNANAVASAGAM,
St. Christopher's Church,
Tiruchi-1.

MADRAS DIOCESE

A 'dawn worship' on the Beach

Early morning on 13th August 1966 (Saturday) a small but enthusiastic congregation of Christians (of all denominations)—men, women and children—met on the beach at San Thome, behind the

St. Thomas' English Church, for a short period of common worship. The service was organised by the pastors of St. Thomas' English and Tamil Churches, San Thome.

The service started with an invocation to God, with chanting (in Tamil) of Psalms 63, by Sri Dhanapandian (of A.I.R., Madras), which was most inspiring. There was then a call to silent meditation by a little girl—a pupil of St. Thomas Sunday School—followed by a few suitable prayers by the presbyter Rev. Peace B. David. These prayers helped us to raise our thoughts to the Lord of all creations and thank Him for this great and wonderful universe—for the Sun, the Moon and the Stars, and the manifold beauties of the earth, sky and sea—for the singing of the birds and for His marvellous wisdom upholding them all. They also helped us to remember the Saints over the ages, and specially the great Christians of our own land—like Krishna Pillai, Vedanayaga Sastriar, Panditha Ramabai, Sadhu Sundar Singh and others, who had sung and spoken in Praise of God's mighty acts.

It was significant that this service was held on this beach, at San Thome, a place hallowed by the visit of Saint Thomas, one of the twelve apostles of our Lord—reminding us members present, that this country of ours—Bharat, stretching forth, as it does, like a Southern Cross (from the vast Himalayas on the North, to Kanyakumari on the South) still waited to be brought fully to the feet of the Saviour, the Sun of Righteousness.

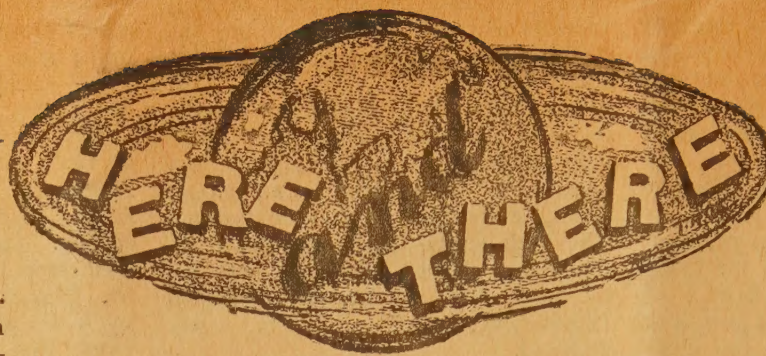
There was then a Tamil Lyric 'கதிராவன் எழுதின்ற காலைமில் இறைவனை', so devotedly sung by Sri Dhanapandian, again raising our souls to the very heights of spiritual ecstasy.

One of the members of the Women's Fellowship—Mrs. C. P. Michael then led us in a short intercessory prayer—asking for God's guidance of our country, which was about to celebrate its Independence anniversary on 15-8-66—and for God's peace in the midst of the present turmoil and strife in different parts of the World.

The highlight of the service was the beautiful sermon by the young talented South Indian Evangelist and Soloist, the Rev. Sam Kamalesan of the Immanuel Methodist Church, Madras. The service having been arranged as a special remembrance of God's gift of the Holy Spirit, through His Son, the speaker emphasised the need for us, both to receive this gift in its fulness and to use it for glorifying God in our daily work. The grace of God was there to be received and released in an ungrudging manner. The whole service

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WORLD VISION TEAM REPORTS ON NAGALAND



MONROVIA, California—

A team of World Vision representatives recently returned here from Nagaland with reports of remarkable Christian growth in that Indian State which has been closed to missionary influence since 1954.

Four men from World Vision, an interdenominational missionary service organization, went to Nagaland for the 56th Pastors' Conference sponsored by the organization. They made up one of the first groups of Christian outsiders permitted in the area since Baptist missionaries were ordered by the government to leave the country 12 years ago.

It appeared for awhile that the World Vision delegation would be unable to acquire entry permits to the area. The conclave occurred at a period following closely on the heels of a series of minor eruptions by rebel Nagas who would endeavour through force to gain independence for the State marked by the Indian government as 'a disturbed area.' Nagaland is located between Burma and the valley of the Brahmaputra River in Assam.

Permits were granted, however, the day before the group was due to set out for the conference. After a three hour flight and a six hour Jeep ride, team members said, they arrived at Mokokchung to discover that Christian Nagas had been engaged in more constructive enterprises than blowing up trains and marching to face Indian troops.

The conference was conducted in a 50 foot tall 'bamboo cathedral' the size of a football field. It had been constructed in a single day by 1,000 members of a Naga church in a highly organized undertaking.

The conference was the largest Christian gathering in Nagaland's history.

Dr. Paul S. Rees, World Vision vice-president at large, who co-ordinates the Pastors' Conference programme, described the overwhelming responsiveness of Nagaland Christians—who reportedly make up 51 per cent of the state's 400,000 population—as 'one of the mysteries associated with the Church's missionary witness.'

Dr. Bob Pierce, World Vision president, headed the Nagaland conference team which Dr. Rees described as 'one part Brazilian, one part Vietnamese, two parts Indian and four parts American.'

On the team in addition to Dr. Pierce and Dr. Rees were Dr. Richard Halverson, World Vision vice-president; Dr. Ted W. Endstrom, executive vice-president; Rev. Subodh Sahu, Indian evangelist from the State of Orissa, and Dr. Benjamin Moraes, pastor of Copacabana Presbyterian Church of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

The Nagaland conference was preceded a few days by a similar event at Poona, India, where more than 600 national pastors participated in instruction classes conducted by World Vision team members. This conference was arranged expressly for pastors, team members reported.

Daily participation at Nagaland, however, was another matter, said team members. Attendance ranged from 9,000 to 11,000 everyday, including the 500 pastors in the country, and numerous Christian workers and lay people.

The conference was conducted in the 'bamboo cathedral' on the grounds of a high school which closed to give youngsters opportunity to attend the conference. Other young scholars received an unanticipated holiday when all the

schools within a several mile radius were emptied of benches to provide seating for the huge crowd.

A young people's choir was seated on the platform during services. The 500

youths sang hymns in English and in five national dialects. Representatives from each of the tribes in the choir wore brightly-coloured, woven blankets which bore distinctive tribal designs.

Although a strong church flourishes in Nagaland now, said team members, 15 years ago some of the 16 tribes that make up the population were headhunters—and there are still some hill people who kill this way.

Christian work began in this primitive country about 100 years ago. It was successfully growing when the missionaries were expelled. Since that time, the area was relatively cut off from all outside Christian influence until Dr. Pierce travelled there early this year to initiate planning for the May conference.

Naga Christians appear none the worse for the missionaries' departure.

Under the influence of dedicated national churchmen, the Christian population in this 6,000 square mile State has continued to prosper spiritually. There are now 500 churches in Nagaland and 300 pastors, World Vision team members said.

Summing up impact of the conference in Naga lives, Dr. Rees quoted the words of Pastor Kijung who delivered the closing address:

'The heavenlike tabernacle will be no more after a few hours. The long expected World Vision team is leaving us, but the living message preached to us by these men of God will go with us to all places in Nagaland.'

'All this now is a living memory in our hearts. It is now in the Naga soil. From now on the opportunity is ours to get hold of it and to act so that others will see Christ in us.'

(Continued from p. 15)

was very helpful in enabling us to worship God with real fervour and devotion and also in an indigenous way. The fact that there were members from different denominations and that both Protestants and Catholics participated, helped to deepen the spirit of ecumenism, which is already manifest-

ing itself in the Churches all over the world. The service came to a close with the singing of the Hymn 'Stand up and bless the Lord', and the benediction was pronounced by the presbyter.

Prof. Ignatius Absalom, St. Thomas Basilica Church, then spoke a few words of appreciation of holding services of

this kind, and said there ought to be more of these services (almost once a quarter) to bring together Christians of all denominations, in a real fellowship and witness.

C. P. MICHAEL,
Retd. Inspector of Police, C.I.D.

NOTICES

WORLD SUNDAY SCHOOL DAY

Sunday, November 6th, 1966

This day will be observed by numerous Sunday Schools all over the country as a day of prayer and thanksgiving for the Christian nurture of the young. A Worship Programme is under preparation. It includes a play under the title:

'Love's Hiding Place'

One copy of the Programme free; and additional copies at 45 P. World Sunday School Seals at Rs. 2 for an album of 20 Seals.

Will you ask for these immediately? A successful celebration involves several rehearsals of the play. Will you also help make the Day widely known in your area and urge your Church to observe it?

The Administrative Secretary,

INDIA SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION,

Coonoor, Nilgiris, S. India.

SUVARTHA VANI: VIJAYAWADA

Applications for the posts of Production Assistant and Music Assistant are to be received by the Director, Suvartha Vani, Box 379, Vijayawada-2, on or before 15th November 1966.

General Qualifications :

The applicant should be a member in good standing of the Christian Church. Must have Biblical knowledge and sound Christian beliefs. The recommendation of the head, or person in authority, in that Church body should be sent direct to Suvartha Vani.

Suvartha Vani is engaged in the production of Telugu radio programmes, therefore Telugu must be the applicant's mother-tongue.

Specific Qualifications :

1. *Production Assistant*—must have passed a university degree course. Should have leadership ability, with knowledge and experience in dramatics, a good radio voice and writing ability in Telugu. Will be expected to take training in radio script writing and radio production. Minimum age 30 years, maximum age 45 years. Salary scale Rs. 200-10-300, with D.A., P.F., medical benefits and housing allowance up to Rs. 65.
2. *Music Assistant*—must have passed S.S.L.C. and have successfully completed at least a three-year course on Karnatic Music at a recognized music school or college and must have received a diploma. Should have a good radio voice. Maximum age 45 years. Salary and allowances according to qualifications up to a maximum starting salary of Rs. 200 plus allowances.

CHRISTA KUTEERA WORK CAMPS

The Fourth Christa Kuteera Work Camp is to be held from the 22nd of October to 2nd of November, 1966 at Siddanabavi Tal. Kalghatgi Dist. Dharwar, near Hubli.

We will provide free food and shelter to the delegates and other expenses are to be borne by the volunteers.

For further particulars kindly write to the below address :

THE REV. S. S. DHAWALE,
Christa Kuteera, Siddanabavi,
P.O. Devikop, Dist. Dharwar,
Mysore State, S. India.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

BISHOP RICHARD LIPP
7334 Suessen
Gneisenaustasse
Wuertt. Germany.

(Continued from page 12)

ding Diocesan Committee, but by a few independent lay people (—a trust). To whom would they be responsible??

How do you imagine we in hospitals could do our work to our utmost capability, if we have no responsibility for it?

He mentions 'misappropriation of funds...' Does this never happen with people in secular employ? No institution, whose books are annually audited, needs to be afraid to give account of all their doings, as we do to the appropriate Diocesan Committee.

On the day, when you deny us lay people in Church-employ the right to share the responsibility of administration of our own institutions and Church, I think many of us should hand in our resignation, as you question our honour. And without this honour we cannot work properly.

Sincerely yours,

CHRISTA KUPFERNAGEL

35, Kassel Franzgraben 61
15-7-66

IV

Dear Editor,

Mr. R. D. Paul, in his simple and forthright style has ventilated the feelings of many an independent layman through his article, 'Are Independent Laymen Wanted?', published in the June issue of the *Churchman*.

It is not uncommon that invidious distinctions are made between the clergy and the laity on one side, and between

the laity in whole-time service of the Church in its institutions and those in secular occupations on the other. In a certain diocese for one and the same offence (of adultery) a layman in secular occupation had been ex-communicated whereas two Presbyters in whole-time ministerial work have been merely removed from work and enjoy privileges of full-membership. A notice of motion: 'that offices such as Convener of the Board and the Secretaries of all committees connected with the education in the diocese should be held by persons who are engaged in the education work of the diocese', is under consideration. Wives of Presbyters, some of whom enjoy the privilege of *not* sharing in the ministry of their husbands because of relaxation of Rules, and have very little association with the pastorates are elected as *one* of the *only two* Lay delegates to the Diocesan Council from pastorates where their husbands reside. Obviously a manipulation.

Under the circumstances, the pucca layman is in a state of bewilderment for he cannot easily fit into the present day set-up of the Diocesan hierarchy. It is a pity that the occasional calls of experienced and devoted men like Mr. Paul are considered as voices in the vast wilderness of the CSI. I wish that the dioceses review the position to secure the services of independent laymen, 'who are not an unimportant portion of the membership of the Church'.

Yours sincerely,

Hyderabad, A.P.

P. A. SUSHEEL RAO.

LATEST ARRIVALS

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The Real Pearl and The Real Life —both these contain meditations of Sadhu Sundar Singh and are published for the first time in English (each)	1 00
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